

## **Sunlit Conversation Session: Bios and Pictures for the Moderator and Speakers**

**Moderator: Jayathma Wickramanayake**



Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake was appointed as the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth in June 2017 at the age of 26. In this role, Jayathma works to expand the UN's youth engagement and advocacy efforts across all four pillars of work – sustainable development, human rights, peace and security and humanitarian action – and serves as a representative of and advisor to the Secretary-General.

Originally from Sri Lanka, Ms. Wickramanayake has worked extensively on youth development and participation, and has played a key role in transforming the youth development sector in her home country.

Prior to taking up her post, Ms. Wickramanayake was instrumental in creating the movement for civic and political engagement of young people, especially young women in Sri Lanka named "Hashtag Generation". Previously, she advocated for global youth development on an international level including as the first ever Sri Lankan Youth Delegate to the United Nations and as the youth lead negotiator and member of the International Youth Task Force of the World Conference on Youth 2014 where she played a critical role in mainstreaming youth in the Post-2015 Process and in the establishment of World Youth Skills Day.

### **Panelists**

**H.E. Ambassador Maritza Chan**



Maritza Chan is a Costa Rican career diplomat, academic, and activist. She was appointed Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations on 15 August 2022. Maritza Chan is the first Costa Rican woman to occupy the role since Costa Rica signed the UN Charter in 1945. Before her appointment, Maritza Chan served as Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations from March 2020 to August 14, 2022.

Maritza Chan has twenty-five years of professional experience at the highest political level. She has represented Costa Rica before the United States and multilateral organizations in both Washington D.C. and New York. She is an international peace and security expert and an advocate for the Women, Peace, and Security agenda.

She has been recognized twice by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), as one of the leading agents for change advocating for arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation in 2014 and 2021. Maritza Chan was Costa Rica's lead negotiator on the Arms Trade Treaty (2010-2015) and Vice-Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on Conventional Ammunition, which established a new global framework for the lifetime management of ammunition (2022-2023). She has published multiple articles on her negotiating experience in disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control. She has vast connections with international and regional organizations, as well as civil society and academia.

Ambassador Chan is part of the International Advisory Council of the International Peace Institute. She is currently Vice President of the 2023 Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, and the United Nations Office for Project Services on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group of States (GRULAC). She also served as President of the UNICEF Executive Board in 2022 and conducted the first field visit of the Bureau to Thailand after the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2018, Maritza Chan returned to Washington D.C. as the Head of the Political Section of the Costa Rican Embassy (2018-2020) after acting as Coordinator of the Organization of the United States in San José, Costa Rica (2015-2017). Maritza Chan served at the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations in New York (2010-2015). She also served at the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the Organization of American States in Washington D.C (2005-2009), and the Embassy of

Costa Rica to the United States in Washington D.C (2002-2005). Maritza Chan started her career as a Senior Speech-Writer for the President of Costa Rica (1998-2002).

### **Mr. Cillian Lohan**



Cillian Lohan, member of the Civil Society Organisations' Group and is currently the Vice-President of the NAT section. He has been acting as Vice-President of the European Economic and Social Committee from October 2020 to April 2023, and has been an active member of the institution since 2015.

He is a leader in the field of the Circular Economy and was the inaugural chair of the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, which he helped to establish. Cillian has extensive experience as a delegate to the UN, working on initiatives such as the COP climate negotiations and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

As CEO of the Green Economy Foundation, he has overseen ambitious projects, including the planting of over one million trees in Ireland and the establishment of a wildlife reserve in Tobago.

Cillian graduated from University College Cork and the University of Ulster with a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in Science.

### **Mr. Stephen Collet**



Steven is a change maker, with a passion for both international and organizational development.

He has been working on economic development, trade and investment throughout his career, active in multilateral, bilateral and private sector arena's.

He served as a diplomat in Tanzania and Vietnam.

He was Chief of Staff and Director for Sustainable Economic Development at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He was Executive Board member of IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative, making the business case for sustainable global value chains.

Steven studied Social Sciences in Brussels and Nijmegen. He is alumnus of THINK, the School for Creative Leadership.

**Hanyuan (Karen) Wang**



Hanyuan (Karen) Wang is the CEO and founder of Climind, a data-as-a-service platform that delivers actionable climate data infrastructure through AI technologies to facilitate mitigation and adaptation solutions. She is the first female Chinese elected as an SDG young leader recognized by the United Nations. Her goal is to build technologies to facilitate decision-making in order to combat climate change.

Karen is also a research assistant at Imperial College London's Centre for Climate Finance and Investment (CCFI), where her work centres on voluntary carbon markets, climate risks, and nature-based solutions with a particular focus on the Asian market.

In addition to her climate-focused pursuits, Karen has gained valuable experience in the data sector through her work with Merrill Lynch and Microsoft. She went to Hong Kong Baptist University, Imperial College London, and is a Schwarzman Scholar from Tsinghua University. She is a member of the Board of Directors for the Museum of United Nations – UN Live, an independent NGO and visionary global museum.

With her Bai ethnic background, Karen also dedicates her time to preserving the Bai dialect in China.

**Mr. Daniele Taurino**



Daniele (he/him) is an Italian philosopher, poet, journalist and activist for nonviolence. He is also the co-founder of the Italian Network on Youth, Peace and Security and the editorial manager of the magazine *Azione nonviolenta*. He has spent the past five years representing the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO-BEOC) within the Youth Forum family before being elected as Board Member, in charge of the portfolio on Sustainability, Climate Justice & Youth Peace and Security. Daniele is also a trainer and project manager, supporting many youth-led initiatives and projects in Italy, the EU and beyond.

### **Ms. Ana Aguirre**



Ana Aguirre is co-founder and worker owner at TAZEBAEZ S.Coop, an innovation group that focuses its activity in the creation of learning and training ecosystems for companies and education institutions (Travelling U.); visual communication (MakeItVisual); and participates in

various companies in emerging sectors. In TAZEBAEZ Ana leads the Cooperative Development line and is a member of the innovation consultancy team. Since 2020 she is COO of Platform Cooperatives NOW! (Mondragon University and New School) and she was one of 12 participants at the Harvard Research Sprint on Data Cooperatives. Ana serves as Global Youth President in the International Cooperative Alliance where she is the Representative of Youth in the Board of directors. She is also part of the Membership Committee and the Cooperative Identity Advisory Group.

### **Ms. Ronelli Requena**



Ronelli Requena is the founder and fashion designer of Zayvha Sarai Limited, a Belizean fashion brand that specializes in custom bridal and event gowns. She holds an Associate's degree in Biology from St. John's College Junior College. Prior to her entrepreneurial journey, she was a Meteorological Officer III at the National Meteorological Service. Ronelli has several years of entrepreneurial experience and volunteering, in 2020 she was one of the four candidates to represent Belize at the Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative Fellowship Program. She serves in the Technical Steering Committee for the Child Advisory board in San Ignacio/Santa Elena, member in the One Young World national board, treasurer and Co-founder of NIME (Networking Internacional de Mujeres Empresarias) and is also the Product designer for Xe'il Belize. She believes that fashion is more than what you wear, it is beyond the runway: fashion can be used to make opportunities for others, to address social and environmental problems and creating an identity.